CLAIMS

1. A method of assessing the ability of a securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions, the method comprising:

identifying one or more assessment issues in an issue and resolution log;

capturing process and technology performance information for the securities processing system;

analyzing the process and technology performance information with respect to the one or more assessment issues;

capturing information regarding the ability of at least one system external to the securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions, wherein the at least one system external to the securities processing system may include an industry-wide system, a business partner system, or a vendor system;

formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system;

prioritizing the at least one recommendation based on the analysis of the technology and performance information; and

developing an implementation plan, wherein the implementation plan includes at least one task associated with the at least one recommendation.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of assessing progress on the at least one task of the implementation plan.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of managing a plurality of activities for assessing the ability of a securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of managing a plurality of activities for assessing the ability of a securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions further includes

defining at least one project objective and scope;

developing a communications strategy;

creating a work plan;

recording the status of the at least one project at periodic intervals;

5 updating the issue and resolution log; and

communicating with key sponsors.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of identifying one or more assessment issues further comprises:

10 creating and updating an interview guide based on a review of the long term business strategy and plan of major business units;

identifying key executives within the major business units for interview;

conducting interviews with the key executives to identify critical issues for straight through processing across the organization;

15 summarizing the identified critical issues in an issues log;

developing a future state for the securities processing system that implements straight through processing; and

refining the project scope and work plan in view of information obtained from the interviews conducted with the key executives.

20

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of capturing process and technology performance information for the securities processing system further comprises:

defining one or more business processes in the securities processing

25 system, wherein each business process includes at least one business activity;

capturing aggregate human capital resource information corresponding to the one or more business processes and the at least one business activity included in each business process;

capturing aggregate level of automation information corresponding to the

30 ·one or more business processes and the at least one business activity included in each business process;

capturing aggregate volume impact information corresponding to the one or more business processes and the at least one business activity included in each business process;

importing the aggregate human capital resource information and the aggregate level of automation information into a securities processing system performance database;

generating from data in the securities processing system performance database a human capital resource report, an automation report, a process fragmentation report, and an impact of changing business volume report; and

creating a list of critical issues based on an analysis of the human capital resource, automation, process fragmentation, and impact of changing business volume reports.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of analyzing the process and technology performance information with respect to the one or more assessment issues further includes:

identifying business processes and business activities associated with the one or more assessment issues;

assessing for each identified process a current state and a desired state implementing straight through processing; and

assigning a straight through processing impact score and a gap score to each identified process.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing information regarding the ability of at least one system external to the securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions further includes:

identifying business partner systems and vendor systems whose implementation of straight through processing will impact the business processes and business activities of the securities processing system; and

assessing the magnitude of the impact on the securities processing system of the readiness of the business partner systems and the vendor systems for implementing straight through processing.

9.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system further comprises:

identifying technology applications associated with the one or more business processes in the securities processing system, wherein each business process includes at least one business activity; and

assessing the technology applications against a plurality of functional and technical criteria.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system further comprises:

assessing the ability of the information technology infrastructure of the securities processing system to implement straight through processing in the securities processing system; and

identifying technology applications or information technology infrastructure solutions of the industry-wide system, vendor systems, and business partner systems that may be used to implement straight through processing in the securities processing system.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system further comprises:

identifying current information technology infrastructure initiatives that may impact the ability of the securities processing system to implement straight through processing.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of prioritizing the at least one recommendation further includes:

identifying potential process and technology improvement opportunities;

identifying the business processes affected by the potential process and technology improvement opportunities; and

assigning a priority to each potential process and technology improvement opportunity, where the priority of each potential process and technology improvement opportunity is influenced by straight through processing impact scores assigned to the business processes affected by the potential process and technology improvement opportunities.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of prioritizing the at least one recommendation further includes:

grouping the potential process and technology improvement recommendations into one or more projects;

creating a definition for each project, wherein the project definition includes project scope, project approach, project deliverables, project timing, and project resourcing; and

identifying any interdependencies between projects.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of prioritizing the at least one recommendation further includes:

developing a business case for each project;

estimating the costs of each project; and

analyzing the costs of each project with respect to the potential benefits of the project.

15. A computer assisted diagnostic system for assessing the readiness of a securities processing system for adopting a straight through processing trading environment, the system comprising:

an initial form having an activatable command button wherein online user documentation is displayed upon activation, an activatable command button wherein a listing accessing background information documents are presented upon activation, an activatable command button wherein execution of a straight

5   through processing data tool program is initiated upon activation, and an activatable command button wherein the initial form is exited upon activation;

online user documentation accessible through the initial programmable form;

one or more background information documents accessible through the

10   initial programmable form;

a straight through processing data tool program comprising plurality of self-contained windows, wherein each self-contained window is associated with one of a plurality of straight through processing readiness assessment steps, wherein a straight through processing step may include one or more substeps, and

15   the plurality of straight through processing readiness assessment steps includes:

identifying one or more assessment issues;

capturing process and technology performance information for the securities processing system;

analyzing the process and technology performance information with

20   respect to the one or more assessment issues;

capturing information regarding the ability of at least one system external to the securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions, wherein the at least one system external to the securities processing system may include an industry-wide system, a business partner

25   system, or a vendor system;

formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system;

prioritizing the at least one recommendation; and

developing an implementation plan, wherein the implementation plan

30   includes at least one task associated with the at least one recommendation.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of assessing progress on the at least one task of the implementation plan.

17. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of managing a plurality of activities for assessing the ability of a securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions.

18. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 17, wherein the step of managing a plurality of activities for assessing the ability of a securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions further includes:

    defining at least one project objective and scope;

    developing a communications strategy;

    creating a work plan;

    recording the status of the at least one project at periodic intervals;

    updating the issue and resolution log; and

    communicating with key sponsors.

19. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 18, wherein the step of identifying one or more assessment issues further comprises:

    creating and updating an interview guide based on a review of the long term business strategy and plan of major business units;

    identifying key executives within the major business units for interview;

    conducting interviews with the key executives to identify critical issues for straight through processing across the organization;

    summarizing the identified critical issues in an issue and resolution log;

    developing a future state for the securities processing system that implements straight through processing; and

    refining the project scope and work plan in view of information obtained from the interviews conducted with the key executives.

20. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 19, wherein the step of capturing process and technology performance information for the securities processing system further comprises:

defining one or more business processes in the securities processing system, wherein each business process includes at least one business activity;

capturing aggregate human capital resource information corresponding to the one or more business processes and the at least one business activity included in each business process;

capturing aggregate level of automation information corresponding to the one or more business processes and the at least one business activity included in each business process;

capturing aggregate volume impact information corresponding to the one or more business processes and the at least one business activity included in each business process;

importing the aggregate human capital resource information, the aggregate level of automation information, and the aggregate volume impact information into a securities processing system performance database;

generating from data in the securities processing system performance database a human capital resource report, an automation report, a process fragmentation report, and an impact of changing business volume report; and

updating the issue and resolution log based on an analysis of the human capital resource, automation, process fragmentation, and impact of changing business volume reports.

21. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 20, wherein the step of analyzing the process and technology performance information with respect to the one or more assessment issues further includes:

identifying business processes and business activities associated with the one or more assessment issues;

assessing for each identified process a current state and a desired state implementing straight through processing; and

assigning a straight through processing impact score and a gap score to each identified process.

22. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 15, wherein the step of capturing information regarding the ability of at least one system external to the securities processing system to apply straight through processing to securities transactions further includes:

identifying business partner systems and vendor systems whose implementation of straight through processing will impact the business processes and business activities of the securities processing system; and

assessing the magnitude of the impact on the securities processing system of the readiness of the business partner systems and the vendor systems for implementing straight through processing.

23. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 15, wherein the step of formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system further comprises:

identifying technology applications associated with the one or more business processes in the securities processing system, wherein each business process includes at least one business activity; and

assessing the technology applications against a plurality of functional and technical criteria.

24. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 15, wherein the step of formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system further comprises:

assessing the ability of the information technology infrastructure of the securities processing system to implement straight through processing in the securities processing system; and

identifying technology applications or information technology infrastructure solutions of the industry-wide system, vendor systems, and business

partner systems that may be used to implement straight through processing in the securities processing system.

25. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 15, herein the step of formulating at least one recommendation for improving process and technology performance for the securities processing system further comprises:

identifying current information technology infrastructure initiatives that may impact the ability of the securities processing system to implement straight through processing.

26. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 15, wherein the step of prioritizing the at least one recommendation further includes:

identifying potential process and technology improvement opportunities;

identifying the business processes affected by the potential process and technology improvement opportunities; and

assigning a priority to each potential process and technology improvement opportunity, where the priority of each potential process and technology improvement opportunity is influenced by straight through processing impact scores assigned to the business processes affected by the potential process and technology improvement opportunities.

27. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 26, wherein the step of prioritizing the at least one recommendation further includes:

grouping the potential process and technology improvement recommendations into one or more projects;

creating a definition for each project, wherein the project definition includes project scope, project approach, project deliverables, project timing, and project resourcing; and

identifying any interdependencies between projects.

28. The computer-assisted diagnostic system of claim 27, wherein the step of prioritizing the at least one recommendation further includes:

developing a business case for each project;

estimating the costs of each project; and

5   analyzing the costs of each project with respect to the potential benefits of the project.

10